

Agenda Item	11.
Report No	RES/43/18

Committee: Corporate Resources Committee

Date: 29 August 2018

Report Title: **Corporate Resources Service - Quarterly Performance Report**

Report By: Depute Chief Executive & Director of Corporate Resources

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report provides performance information against the Accounts Commission's Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) together with key performance measures as at 30 June 2018.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

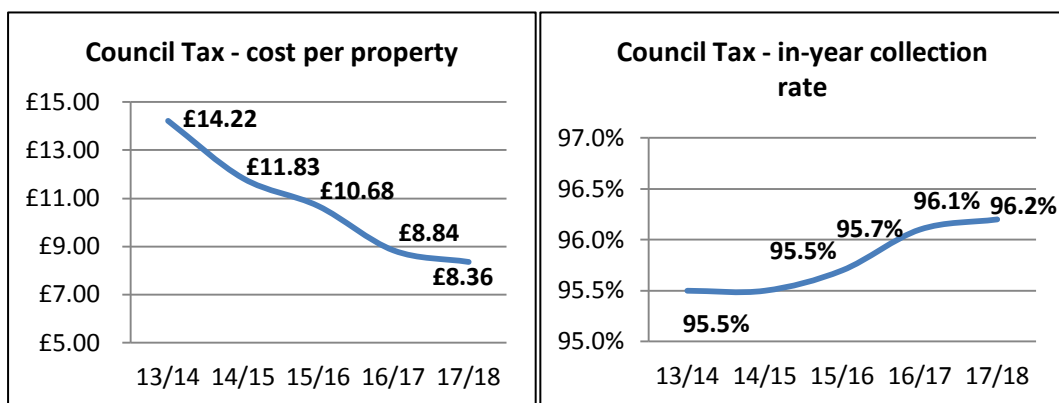
- i. consider these statutory and key performance indicators.

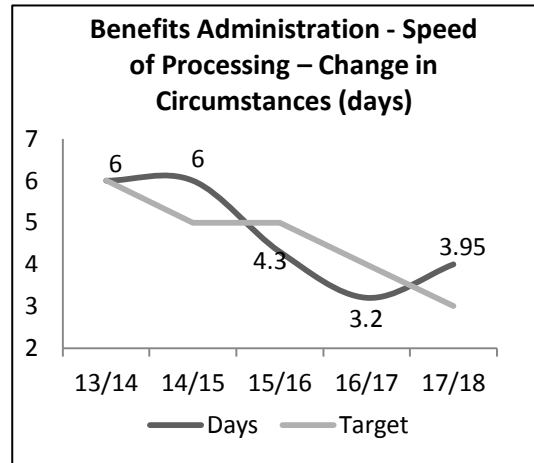
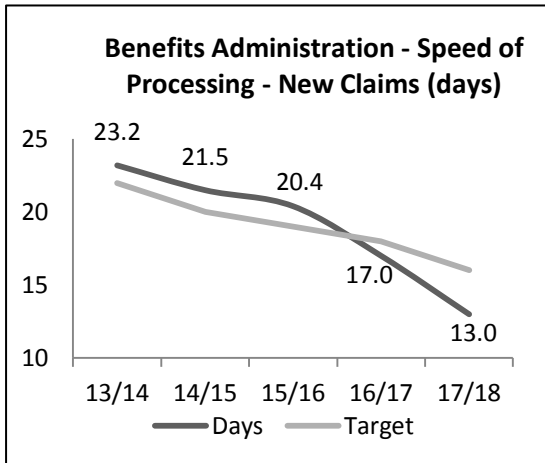
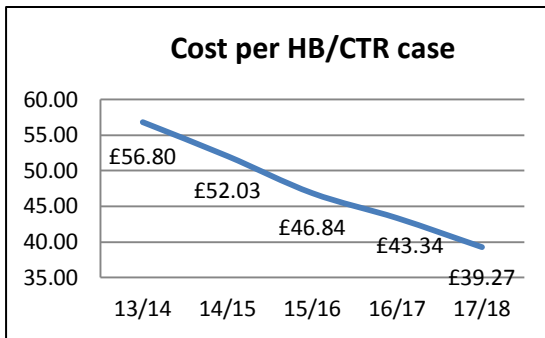
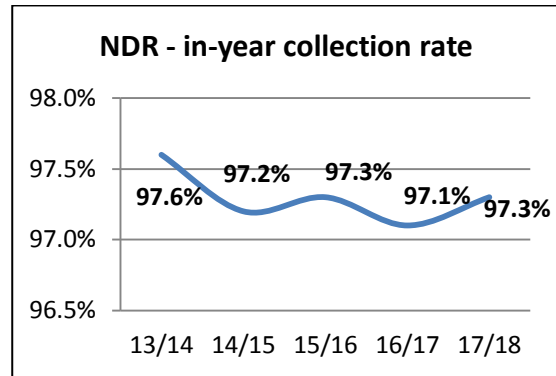
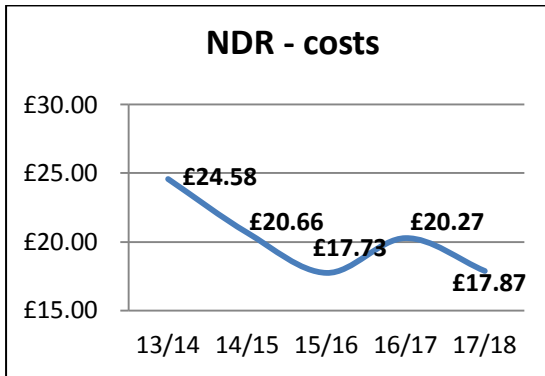
3. Background

- 3.1 This report includes performance against the Accounts Commission's Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) together with key performance measures.
- 3.2 Current year figures are compared with those from the corresponding period in the previous financial year where these are available. In addition, figures from previous years are included where appropriate so that trends may be identified.
- 3.3 Where definitions have changed, direct comparisons can only be made within the time period to which that definition has applied.
- 3.4 Reports will continue to be brought to Committee on these performance indicators on a quarterly basis so that trends can be monitored.
- 3.5 A list of the current SPIs for the Corporate Resources Service is attached as **Appendix 1**.

4. Cost of collecting Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates and administering Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction to 17/18

- 4.1 The Service has a strong commitment to continuous improvement and delivering efficiencies that very much support the Council at a time of significant financial challenge. Importantly, whilst costs are materially reducing many results are seeing significant improvements. This information, including cost information for 17/18, provides Members with some helpful context in considering current performance for 18/19.
- 4.2 The graphs below detail costs (inputs) and results (outputs) of performance since 2013/14 and all generally reporting continuous improvement.





4.3 The table below provides further information on costs which perhaps reinforce the **scale** of cost reduction whilst delivering improved results.

Year/ Cost (m)	Council Tax	NDR	HB/CTR	Total	Movement
2013/14	1.63	0.43	3.09	5.15	
2014/15	1.36	0.36	2.76	4.48	-0.67
2015/16	1.24	0.31	2.40	3.95	-0.53
2016/17	1.03	0.36	2.12	3.51	-0.44
2017/18	0.98	0.35	1.80	3.13	-0.38

4.4 The overall cost of these service areas has reduced by **£2.02m (39%)** since 13/14. This is a significant achievement especially when many results such as increased Council Tax collections and quicker HB/CTR processing times are reporting improvements. Combined, these service areas also report a year-on-year reduction in costs as detailed in the “movement” column. Unsurprisingly this rate of cost reduction delivered is reducing but, whilst challenging, there is a strong commitment by all involved to continue to deliver further efficiencies wherever possible.

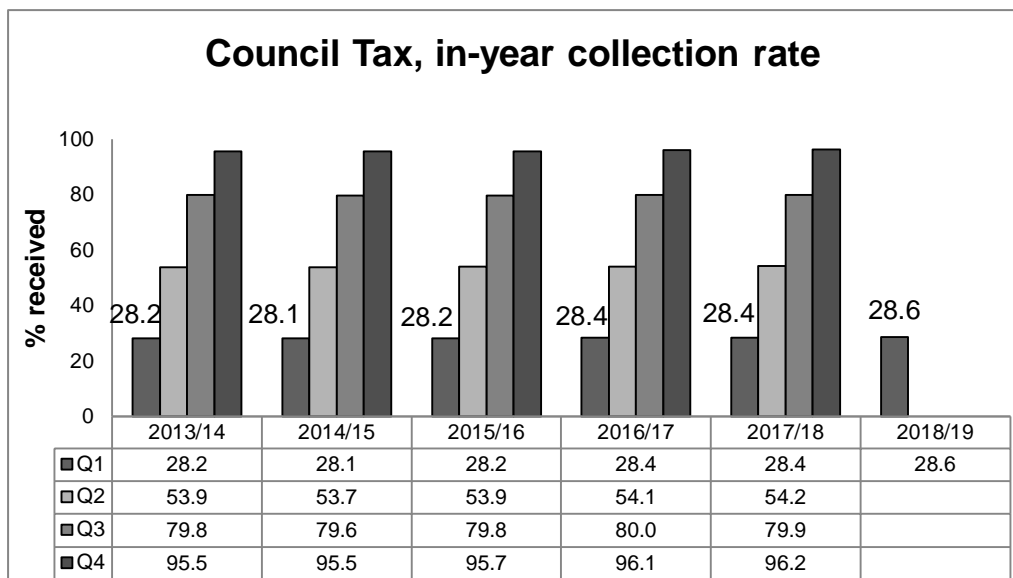
4.5 In addition to cost reductions, a combination of prompt processing combined with work undertaken by officers at national level has resulted in a higher share of unchanged national funding coming to the Highlands. As reported to Members of this Committee in May 2018 within the *Corporate Resources Revenues and Welfare Budget Monitoring report*, the Council has achieved a higher share of national funding as reported below:

- £0.690m Universal Credit / Homelessness
 - £0.608m Council Tax Reduction
 - £0.191m Scottish Welfare Fund
- £1.489m**

4.6 The Highland Council has been selected as a finalist for the 2018 UK's Institute of Revenues Rating & Valuation (IRRV) *Benefits & Welfare Reform Team of Year*. All involved are delighted to have received such recognition for their achievements. The Awards Ceremony takes place as part of the IRRV's UK Annual Conference in October 2018. Across all the Award categories Highland is one of "just" two Scottish authorities that have been selected as finalists (City of Edinburgh being the other for another category).

5.1 Council Tax In-Year Collection Rate

5.1.1

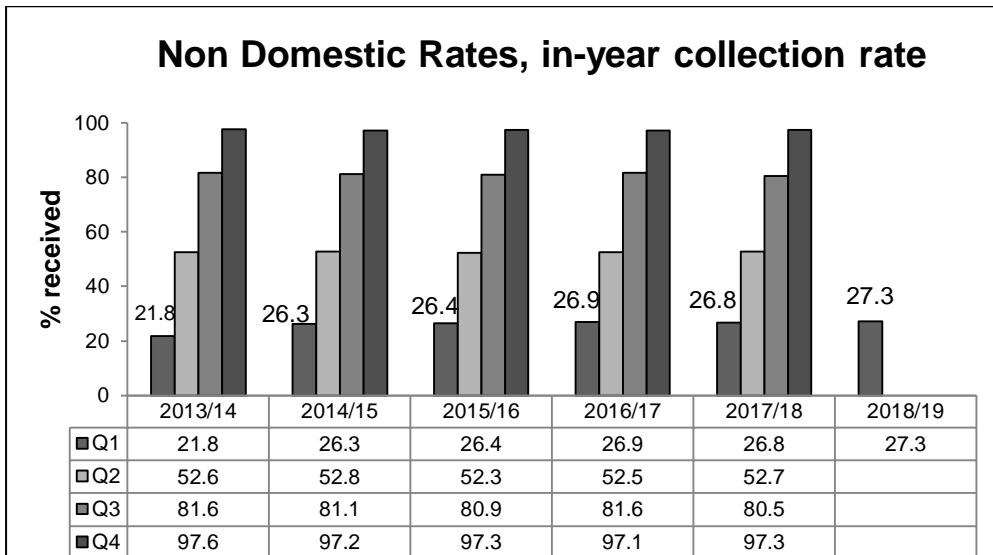


5.1.2 Council Tax in-year collection rate is 28.6%, which continues the positive trend in collection levels achieved. The improvements are mainly attributable to ongoing improvement in business processes and resource management.

5.1.3 Direct debits now make up 73.3% of bill payment representing 79.0% of receipts. These report an improvement on the prior year position of 72.2% and 78.3%, respectively. Increase Direct Debit take-up supports collections performance. For example, Direct Debit take-up was 64.7% in 13/14.

5.2 Non Domestic Rates in-Year Collection Rate

5.2.1

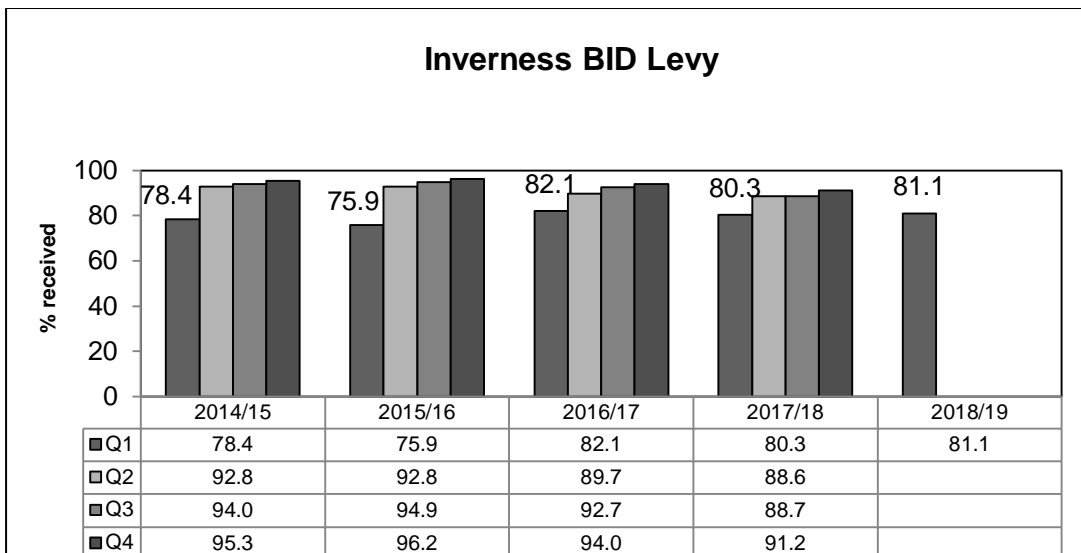


5.2.2 The NDR in-year collection rate for Q1 2017/18 is 27.3% compared to 26.8% prior year.

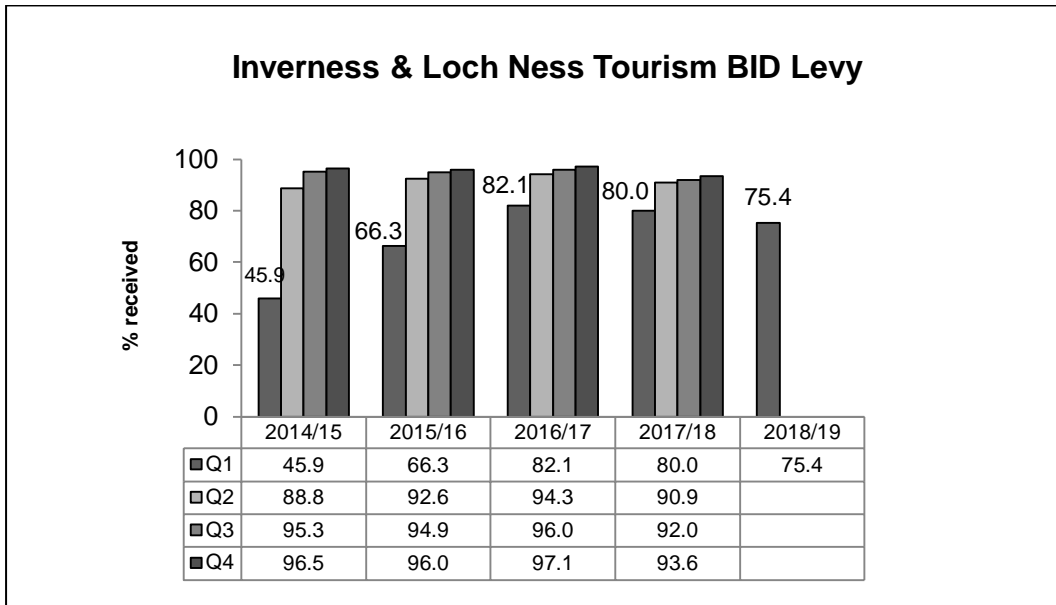
5.2.3 The Council continues to use all relevant measures available under the Rating regime to assist local businesses including encouraging payment by monthly instalments and directing businesses to available rate relief schemes such as the Small Business Bonus Scheme and Transitional Relief (for 18/19). Claims can be made on-line on the Council's web-site (or via paper if businesses so require).

5.3 Business Improvement District (BID) Levies

5.3.1



5.3.2

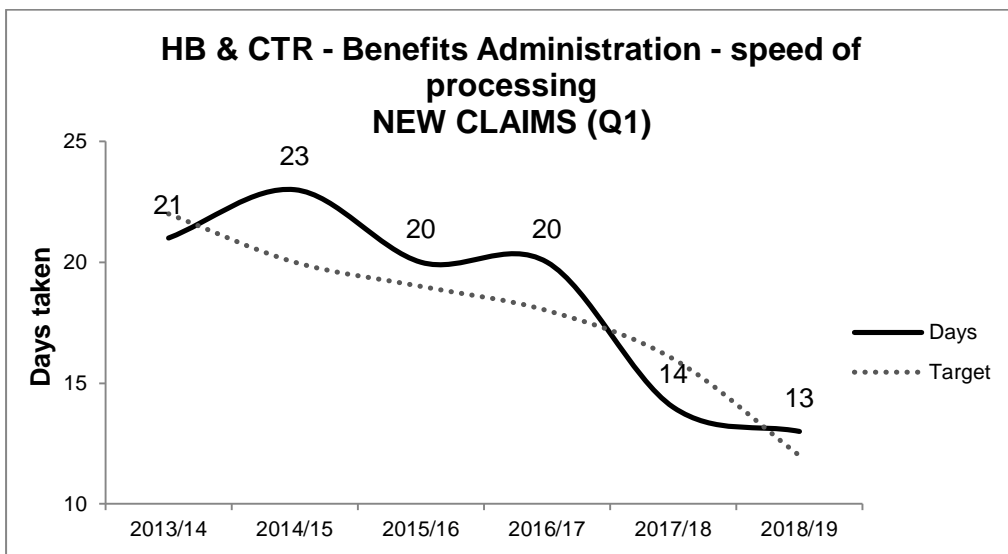


5.3.3 In Q1, the collection rate for the Inverness BID levy was 81.1% compared to 80.3% prior year. Corporate Resources Service staff continue to work with the BID management team to ensure payment rates are maximised.

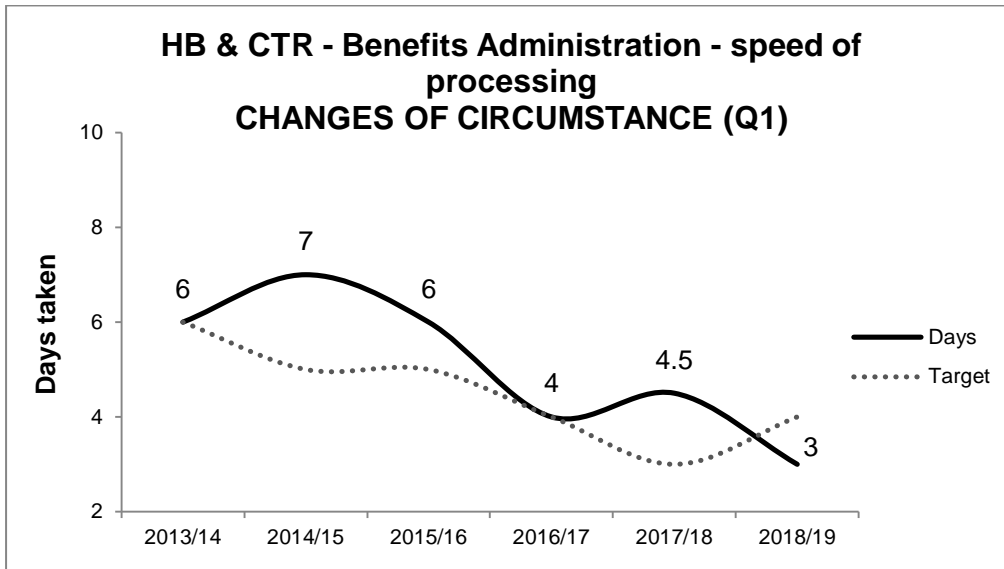
5.3.4 In Q1, the collection rate for the Inverness & Loch Ness Tourism BID levy was 75.4% compared to 80.0% prior year. The collection rate as at the end of July 18 for Tourism BID is 85.5% compared to 84.9% prior year reflecting payment timings / collections including the new additional accounts/businesses that have come into Tourism BID area. Corporate Resources Service staff continue to work with the BID management team to ensure payment rates are maximised.

5.4 Housing Benefit & Council Tax Reduction Benefits Administration - Speed of processing (days)

5.4.1



5.4.2



5.4.3 These indicators reflect the Council’s ability to process work as quickly as possible to ensure applicants receive their entitlement on time and at the correct rate.

5.4.4 Prompt processing times for New Claims and Change in Circumstances assists customers in being advised of the outcome of a new claim / change in their circumstances as quickly as possible. This also helps collection levels and supports the Housing Benefit budget and maximises Department for Work and Pensions subsidy as discussed earlier in this agenda within the “Corporate Resources Service and Welfare Budget – Revenue Monitoring for 2018/19” report.

5.4.5 In Quarter 1, the average processing speed for new claims was 13 days and 3 days for changes of circumstance.

5.4.6 The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) have recently reported national Housing Benefit processing performance to 31 March 2018. The table below details the performance comparing Highland to Scotland, and Highland’s ranking.

Housing Benefit - Days to process 2017/18										
2017/18	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		Year End	
	New Claims	CIC	New Claims	CIC	New Claims	CIC	New Claims	CIC	New Claims	CIC
Highland	15	3.9	12	4.1	12	4.5	13	1.9	13	3.1
Scotland	22	6.2	21	7.8	22	8.6	22	3.2	22	5.4
Rank	1st	3rd	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st	1st

5.4.7 For 17/18, Highland was ranked 1st for both new claims and for change in circumstances.

5.4.8 Highland Council continues to see good improvements in processing over recent years and a material reduction in costs. For example in 13/14, new claims and change in circumstances performance was 23 days and 6 days, respectively. Administration costs in 17/18 are 41% lower than 13/14.

4.4.9 For 2018/19, we are aiming to process new claims within 12 days and change in circumstances within 4 days.

5.5 Welfare Support

5.5.1 Financial benefit to the customer from advice given (£000) (backdated and annualised)						
	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
1 Apr–31 March	1,635	3,975	4,015	4,651	6,024	1,593

5.5.2 Welfare Support (formerly Income Maximisation) continues to support customers and maximising benefits awards. For Q1 2018/19, 346 customers have received additional financial gain totalling £1.593m. Of this, £387k relates to back-dated awards and £1.206m to the annualised weekly gain (i.e. the weekly gain multiplied by 52 weeks).

5.6 TalentLink (Recruitment)

5.6.1 The Council uses CoSLA's on-line recruitment system called *TalentLink*. The system enables applicants to apply for positions online, and allow Council Managers to complete the recruitment process electronically.

5.6.2 TalentLink	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19 Qtr 1
Number of posts advertised	2,199	2,403	1,914	1,947	503
Percentage of posts advertised on time	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number (& percentage) of electronic applications	17,301 95.8%	15,217 95.9%	14,427 95.3%	17,206 97.5%	4,836 98.2%
Percentage of paper applications processed within 2 working days	100%	100%	99.3%	100%	100%

5.6.3 There were 4925 applications received during Quarter 1; 4836 (98.2%) were received in electronic format.

5.6.4 Receiving applications electronically provides numerous benefits including significant reductions in paper (and photocopying), increased information security and reduced filing space. Additionally managers are able to access applications in real time, reducing delays and supporting a consistent and auditable approach to the recruitment process. In terms of paper reductions, the annual equivalent exceeds 250,000 pages with a consumables saving of approximately £5k per annum.

5.7 Single Grant Applications (SGAs)

5.7.1 Business Support provides support to a number of Council staff such as Ward Managers in the administrative process of SGAs. The role is primarily logging SGAs (onto SharePoint), issuing an acknowledgment to customers and distribution of the SGAs to relevant staff.

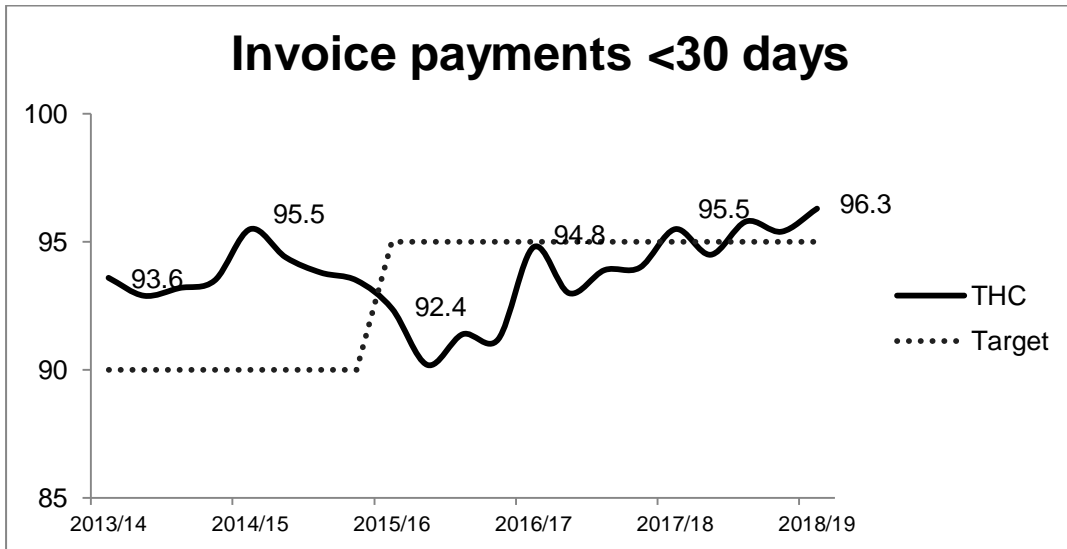
5.7.2 126 Single grant applications were received in Q1, 96.8% of these processed within 5 days bringing with this totalling the year to date figure.

5.7.3

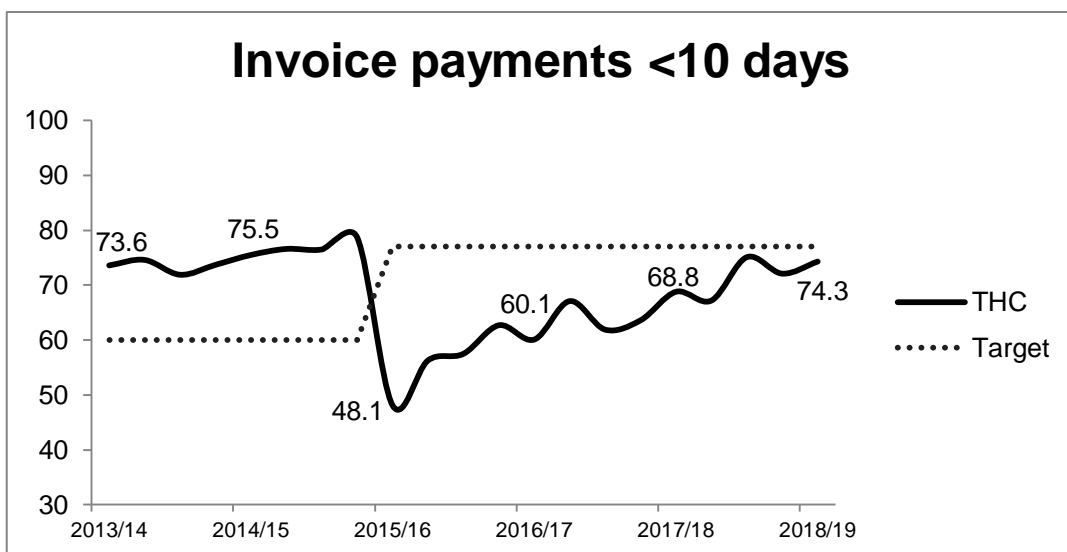
Single Grant Applications	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Percentage logged, acknowledged & distributed within 5 days	97.7%	97.9%	98.3%	99.2%	96.8%

5.8 Payment of Invoices

5.8.1



5.8.2



5.8.3 These indicators measure the efficiency of the Council in paying invoices. They look at the number of invoices paid within 10 days and 30 days of receipt, as a percentage of all invoices paid. Performance at Service level is detailed in **Appendix 2**.

5.8.4 Quarter 1 performance reports significant improvements in both 10 and 30 days compared to prior year with 30 days exceeding the 95% target. 96.3% for 30 days processing is the best quarterly performance delivered by Highland Council.

5.8.5 In Quarter 1 were the invoices currently taking 11-13 days paid within 10 days,

performance within 10 days would be improved by a further 8% (82.3% compared to 74.3%).

- 5.8.6 As reported to previous Committees, Corporate Resources Service staff continues to review all processes looking to deliver improvements wherever possible including the speed of information coming from Services to enable invoices to be processed.

5.9 Attendance Management

5.9.1

	17/18		18/19
	Q3	Q4	Q1
Corporate Resources	1.8	2.4	1.7
Highland Council (non-teaching)	2.6	3.1	2.5

- 5.9.2 In Q1, the average number of days lost per employee within the Corporate Resources Service was 1.7 days. Performance remains lower than the Highland Council non-teaching average of 2.5 days.

- 5.9.3 The service continues to keep staff absence as low as possible and following the Council's HR policies and guidance, implementing measures such as "return to work" interviews and discussions with staff.

6. Implications

- 6.1 Resource – the resource implications are detailed within the report.

Legal – there are no legal implications arising from this report.

Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural) – the prompt processing of benefit claims and the proactive support to customers from Welfare Support will help to mitigate some of the poverty challenges.

Climate Change/Carbon Clever – there are no climate change / carbon clever implications arising from this report.

Risk – there are no risk implications arising from this report.

Gaelic – there are no Gaelic implications arising from this report.

Designation: Depute Chief Executive & Director of Corporate Resources

Date: 13 August 2018

Author: Lucy Lallah, Business Management Analyst,
Corporate Resources

Background Papers: None

APPENDIX 1

Statutory Performance Indicators	Report ref:	Frequency
The average number of working days per employee lost through sickness absence for: b) All other local government employees	4.10	Quarterly
The gross administration cost per benefits case		Annual
The cost of collecting Council Tax per dwelling		Annual
Current year income from Council Tax: a) The income due from Council Tax for the year, net of relief and rebates b) The percentage of a) that was received during the year	4.1	Quarterly
The number of invoices paid within 30 calendar days of receipt as a percentage of all invoices paid	4.9	Quarterly
The number of invoices paid within 10 calendar days of receipt as a percentage of all invoices paid	4.9	Quarterly
Internal Audit - cost of audit/£1m net expenditure		Annual
Insurance - cost/claim processed		Annual
Creditors - unit cost/creditor invoice issued		Annual
Payroll - cost/payslip produced		Annual
Pensions - cost per member		Annual
Cost of Accounting % Net Rev Budget + HRA		Annual
Cost of completing the Annual Accounts		Annual
Cost NDR collection/chargeable property		Annual
% NDR collected by year end	4.2	Quarterly
Cost sundry debtors/debtors account issued		Annual
% income sundry debtors collected during year		Annual
Cost Corporate Finance % Net Revenue Budget		Annual
Cost Procurement section % Net Revenue Budget		Annual

Other performance measures	Report ref:	Frequency
Processing time benefit – new claims (average days)	4.4	Quarterly
Processing time benefit – change in circs (average days)	4.4	Quarterly
Welfare Support	4.5	Quarterly
Business Improvement District (BID) Levy	4.3	Quarterly
Business Support - Talentlink	4.6	Quarterly
Business Support – Single Grant Applications	4.7	Quarterly

APPENDIX 2

Invoice Payments <10 days												
DIRECTORATE	TARGET	16/17	17/18					18/19				
		FY	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	FY	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	FY
Care & Learning	77%	57.6	64.4	61.7	71.3	64.0	65.7	66.3				
Corporate Development		75.1	72.2	76.8	79.5	85.6	78.2					
Chief Executive's		76.7	65.2	73.8	77.9	72.1	72.5	71.4				
Community Services		65.8	72.1	71.7	78.8	81.0	76.4	81.6				
Development & Infrastructure		55.8	65.8	63.6	66.1	65.3	65.3	70.0				
Finance		91.4	84.4	74.9	88.8	80.9	83.0	83.9				
Highland Council		63.3	68.8	67.2	75.1	72.1	71.1	74.3				

Invoice Payments <30 days												
DIRECTORATE	TARGET	16/17	17/18					18/19				
		FY	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	FY	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	FY
Care & Learning	95%	94.5	95.5	93.4	95.4	94.9	94.9	95.2				
Corporate Development		92.8	93.8	93.3	95.2	95.8	94.5					
Chief Executive's		94.1	86.1	91.7	96.8	95.0	92.3	94.3				
Community Services		93.1	95.1	94.6	95.9	95.8	95.4	97.4				
Development & Infrastructure		91.7	95.0	96.6	95.0	95.2	95.4	96.0				
Finance		98.1	98.7	98.8	99.4	98.2	98.9	97.9				
Highland Council		94.0	95.5	94.5	95.8	95.4	95.3	96.3				

DIRECTORATE	Total number of invoices paid in 2016/17 (FY)	Total number of invoices paid in 2017/18 (FY)
Care & Learning	62,484	61,461
Corporate Development	1,941	1,708
Chief Executive's	1,451	963
Community Services	51,333	55,990
Development & Infrastructure	12,643	12,762
Finance	10,107	7,934
Highland Council	139,959	140,818